

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

25 May 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM: Robert C. Ames
National Intelligence Officer for Near East
and South Asia

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: Near East and South Asia

1. Afghanistan. The Taraki regime's ability to contain rebel activity continues to deteriorate. Although the factious rebel groups have not been able to coordinate their efforts and a concerted drive against the regime is unlikely in the near term, the government's lack of control over large portions of the country and increasing tension in areas around the capital could in the near future lead to a collapse of the regime. Although community representatives believe the Soviet Union will take steps to protect its interests in Afghanistan, there is a broad divergence of views on how far the Soviets will go. The Pakistanis have begun to provide small arms to Afghan rebels, thus increasing the likelihood of serious clashes between Afghan and Pak forces in the area of Afghan rebel activity. This also raises the possibility of the Soviets trying to stir trouble in Pakistan's restive Baluchistan province and applying diplomatic pressure on Pakistan in international forums. [REDACTED]

2. Syria - Internal Situation. Terrorist incidents against the government of President Hafiz Assad and members of the Alawite Muslim minority sect that dominate the regime have increased markedly in the last month. Most of the attacks are the work of a fanatic Sunni underground group. The most serious threat is the possibility of Assad's own assassination. Barring that, the regime is probably not in immediate danger, but the recent spate of incidents points to a steady erosion in Assad's hold on power in Syria. [REDACTED]

3. Iraq. Iraq has upgraded its air defenses [REDACTED]

TOP SECRET [REDACTED]

TOP SECRET

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The deployments increase the possibility of an incident should Israeli overflights continue. The increase of air defenses is also a step Iraq would take before moving forces or equipment to Syria via this route. [REDACTED]

4. Nepal. After six weeks of anti-government demonstrations, King Birendra is attempting to placate his opponents through promising reforms including a referendum on Nepal's political system. The government has already been hard pressed to contain civil disorders. Political liberalization may buy some time, but could also lead to more violence if the King's concessions are seen as a sign of weakness or as contending political groups prepare for the referendum. Neither India nor China appears inclined to interfere in Nepal at this time, but an eventual confrontation over Nepal cannot be ruled out completely. [REDACTED]

5. Developments in Areas of Continuing Concern.

a. Lebanon - Although the situation in southern Lebanon has become somewhat less volatile in the past several weeks, the intransigence of the Israeli-backed Christian militias in the south could quickly provoke a crisis that could have nationwide repercussions. The continuation of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel and an apparent shift in Israeli strategy to launching pre-emptive attacks on Palestinian bases inside Lebanon have added to the potential for broader confrontation.

b. Iran - Anti-US sentiment reached record levels this month as Iranians across the political spectrum reacted to the US Senate's condemnation of continuing executions. Ayatollah Khomeini has spearheaded the campaign against the US and on two recent occasions our embassy has had to take extraordinary security precautions against mob attacks. Continuing unrest in Iran's oil-producing province, particularly among Arab inhabitants and oil workers themselves, could threaten production levels.

c. Egypt-Libya - The lowering of tensions along the Libyan-Egyptian border noted last month continued throughout this month. However, President Sadat remains determined to chasten the Libyans [REDACTED]

Robert C. Ames
Robert C. Ames

TOP SECRET [REDACTED]

TOP SECRET

25X1

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: Near East & South Asia

A/NIO/NESA [redacted] (25 May 79)
Distribution [redacted]

25X1

- Cy 1 - DCI
2 - DDCI
3 - ER
4 - DD/NFA
5 - NIO/NESA
6 - NIO/NESA
7 - NIO/Warning
8 - NIO/PE
9 - NIO/USSR
10 - NIO/CH
11 - NIO/CF
12 - NIO/NP
13 - NIO/LA
14 - NIO/EAP
15 - NIO/WE
16 - NIO/AF
17 - NIO/SS
18 - D/OCO
19 - D/OCR
20 - D/OER
21 - D/OPA
22 - D/OSR
23 - D/OGCR
24 - D/OIA
25 - D/OSI
26 - D/OWI
27 - SRP
28 - PBC
29 - NFAC Reg
30 - DDO/NE [redacted]
31 - DDO/EPDS [redacted]
32 - NIO/Near East [redacted]
33 - State/INR/RNA (William Wollé)
34 - DIO/Near East [redacted]
35 - DIA/DN2E1A [redacted]
36 - NSA/G-6 [redacted]
37 - ACSI DAMI FII (LTC Norvell DeAtkine)
38 - ONI/Estimates Br (Alexander Button)
39 - AF/INAKB (Capt. Ronald Bergquist)
40 - HQ USMC Code INTP (Major William Ferrier)

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1